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Question1: Greater focus must be placed on retiring farmers to help the young farmer enter the practice. We can not take the land at a less than fair and reasonable price; yet, that price, in many cases, is well above what a younger family can afford. Therefore, there must be a concerted effort to bring willing partners together between an older generation and the younger willing family.

Question2:

Question3: Small farmers and family farms are virtually history. Today, unless you farm 2,000 to 5,000 acres it is virtually impossible to cover interest expenses on equipment, land purchases and make a living too. This in itself dictates a total review of what "family farm" versus "corporate farm" means. However, the maximum payment process to the "large corporate farm" needs to be enforced and enhanced. Too much money is given to too few people in agriculture today.

Question4: The continued maintenance, at a minimum, and even expansion of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) at best, is absolutely critical to the future of clean water, clean air and the survival of many native species of rare prairie song birds and other upland game and non-game animals as well.

The CRP program is also critical to the restoration of necessary habitat of sufficient acreage size, in appropriate locations, to protect our fragile wildlife and save the environment from the potential ravages of intensive farming practices on highly erodable land.

It is also abundantly clear that critters such as pheasants, quail and many species of prairie song birds and other animals are extremely dependent upon adequate food and cover. This is necessary to survive Iowa's harsh winters and unpredictable spring hatching seasons. Without CRP intensive farming practices would eliminate such cover out of necessity for revenue generation to the farmer.

Here, in Iowa, my wife and I have a small 265 acre farm located in southern Lucas County, Iowa. Approximately 50% is former cropland and the remainder is in old growth hardwood forest. Over the past 4 years we've made enormous strides in returning those former cropland acres to "native tall grass prairie." And, we have intensive forest management plan on the remainder of old growth hardwood forest. Not only are rare prairie wild flowers now abounding, the upland game bird population, which is in serious decline in southern Iowa, is now exploding in numbers on our property.

More importantly, the success of this planned conservation effort, between us and Iowa's DNR, would be impossible without the financial support offered by the CRP and other federal and state conservation programs. Further, our personal financial ability to withhold this entire (highly erodable property) from intensive farming practices would be

impossible.

Gentlemen, it would be catastrophic to now "undo" the tremendous environmental and habitat advantages created over the past two decades by the Conservation Reserve Program on this property and the millions of acres nationally. Not only has there been thousands of successful stoies on millions of acres, just like ours, the financial impact of hunters and hiking tourists who simply want to enjoy a walk on the prairie, is huge in our rural communities. Hotel/motel lodging, sporting goods, food sales and gas purchased is demonstrable in many of our small towns. Without CRP these financial and asthetic benefits will no longer exist in rural America.

Please, recognize the many beneficial impacts CRP has on our natural environment, habitat and economy of rural America. Contrast that with the many negative impacts that are brought on by intensive farming practices on those same highly erodable acres and wetlands. The two are not comparable on erodable lands.

PLEASE, MAINTAIN THE CRP ADVANTAGE AND SAVE THIS OUTSTANDING PROGRAM FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR CHILDREN AND MINE. WHEN HABITAT AND THE ENVIRONMENT FLOURISHES SO DO WE ALL!

Question5: Enhancement of rural economic growth is a critical benefit of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and other conservation practices that are supported financially.

Most states with substantial CRP acres can directly attribute specific dollar amounts invested in their communities that are related to the existance of such wildlife and environmental enhancement benefits created by these programs.

Please maintain the success of these programs and support CRP into the future of all farm programs enacted.

Question6: